

will have freedom and security and prosperity. Freedom comes when you make fewer laws. Prosperity comes when you take less money out of my pocket and give it to government, when Tax Freedom Day comes earlier in the year. Security comes when we have things like a strong national defense, when we allow our government to do those things that are needed to protect the security of the people who live here, and of our country itself.

When I talk to Idahoans, that is what they tell me that they want. That can't exist under a government where the people give power to the government, and the government distributes entitlements. Whoever became free living on entitlements? Whoever became prosperous living on entitlements? Who was ever secure living on entitlements that at any moment can be changed by the 535 Members that serve in Congress.

With that, I would yield back to the gentleman.

Mr. WALBERG. I appreciate those thoughts. I think you got to the nub of the question. It's not the fact that we don't want people to have those entitlements, we don't want them to achieve, we don't want them to have the opportunity that is afforded to all of us here in the United States. But it's based upon the fact, first and foremost, that there is liberty for us to choose, there's liberty for us to be responsible, there's liberty for us to fail, even. And that is quite a liberty, when you think about it. But when we succeed, the liberty to keep and benefit from what we have, and in order to not only care for ourselves, but then voluntarily assist others, and what a liberty that is.

It was said of the Athenians, I read one place, that they desired most freedom, security, and prosperity. And in the end, they lost all of them because they weren't willing to keep liberty first and foremost.

So I appreciate your comments tonight on this eve of Taxpayer Freedom Day, where government often times says why celebrate that? It's your duty to pay the taxes, it's your privilege to pay taxes. Well, I do thank God that I have the opportunity to live in America and I have the opportunity to earn and I have the opportunity to pay a certain level of tax to support a certain level of government that is needed. But I am frustrated that we have gone way beyond that and lost liberty in the process.

I'd like to turn over now some time to another good friend and colleague from Tennessee. DAVID DAVIS has been an outspoken friend of the taxpayer, and I think evidenced by his willingness to battle for the taxpayer and to continue to support prosperity that has blessed his State of Tennessee, and continues to, and sadly, has become home to a number of my Michiganders as well, who have gone for places of employment, and have benefited there. Congressman DAVIS, we hope to bring some of those back to Michigan.

In the meantime, I appreciate you taking the opportunity to talk about the issue of taxes, Tax Freedom Day, and your concerns with it.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Thank you, Mr. WALBERG. Thank you for your friendship, thank you for leadership. You're doing a great job. Thank you for your foresight and understanding that you can't tax and regulate yourself into prosperity. Never could, can't now, and never will. It's that simple.

I do come from the Volunteer State of Tennessee, and thankfully our Tax Freedom Day is not tomorrow. It was actually about 3 weeks ago. The reason it was 3 weeks ago in the Volunteer State is because we keep our taxes low, and people in Tennessee are actually spending their money on their families now and not sending it to the government. I am happy for that. I'd like to see that move even back up in the year a little more.

There are mothers and fathers all across east Tennessee. I have the opportunity to represent the beautiful mountains of northeast Tennessee and there are mothers and fathers sitting back home in east Tennessee and all across America. They sit around their kitchen table and they have to work out a budget. It's that simple.

I can remember my wife and I when we first started our family, having to do that, knowing how much money came in and how much money went out. We had to make some decisions. You can't spend more than you bring in. If you do, you get in a credit crunch. It's amazing that we have a Congress that sometimes don't sit around that kitchen table. That is exactly what we need to be doing.

Those families back in east Tennessee, they are having to choose between buying gasoline, and it costs over \$50 to fill up their pickup truck, and buying their food. They're seeing the price of milk and bread go up. They are having to worry about paying their house payments or making sure they provide health care for their children. Those are the things that moms and dads across America are having to deal with and we have got people right here in Washington that think if we can just tax them a little bit more and spend a little bit more, we can take care of them.

Now where I grew up, I never came to the conclusion if government could just take care of us, things will be okay. Actually, the way we believe back in the mountains in east Tennessee, if government will just get out of our way and keep taxes and regulations low, we have actually been able to take care of ourselves pretty well. We have done it well in America for over 200 years, and why we think we need to change now, I just don't understand it.

Especially when you look at gas prices. My goodness, we passed an energy bill, so-called energy bill back in December on this House floor. It had

new taxes, new regulations. You know what it didn't have? New energy. Now how you can call a bill an energy bill with no energy, I don't get it. Sometimes we just need some common sense. The American people get it. They understand that common sense.

And then you look at the budget. The two things that are facing Americans today are their family budget, their small business budget, and then that cost of energy. Those are the two things that are on peoples' minds across America. And you look at the Democrats' budget resolution, it fails the test of fiscal responsibility miserably. Instead of exercising fiscal restraint in lowering our taxes, the Democrat budget raises taxes by \$683 billion over the course of the next 5 years. You heard me correctly: \$683 billion.

Now I go home to my district every weekend, talk to a lot of people about a lot of issues, and I can tell you not once do I hear somebody say, If you could just raise the budget by \$683 billion and take a little bit more of my tax dollars, my family is going to be better off. I don't hear, If you can just pass an energy bill with no energy and just put a little more tax on top of the energy and regulate them just a little bit more, then my family is going to be better off. That is not what the American people are looking for.

If you look at \$683 billion, that is the largest tax increase in American history. It blows away the previous largest tax increase in history, which was passed in 1993, and that was over \$443 billion. These are real tax hikes on real people.

Here are some staggering statistics for families living in northeast Tennessee. According to the Heritage Foundation, because of the Democrat budget, the average taxpayer in my district will be forced to pay an increase in \$1,596. This will result in almost 2,000 jobs lost and a loss of \$188 million in the First District's economy.

When I go home every weekend, I don't hear people say, Please raise my taxes so we can lose 2,000 jobs. We are actually seeing jobs move to Tennessee because we keep taxes low and keep regulations low. We are a good work State. We have a good work ethic. We certainly don't need the Federal Government to come in and help us to move us in the wrong direction.

By reimposing the marriage penalty tax, roughly 23 million taxpayers will see their taxes increase by \$466 a year simply because they are married. Now in east Tennessee I don't go home every weekend and hear people say, I want you to raise my taxes just because I did what is biblically correct and I did the right thing.

We have choices. We have choices between a bigger economy or a bigger government. Taxing spending is not the road we need to head down. Ronald Reagan once said we don't have a trillion-dollar debt because we haven't taxed enough, we have a trillion-dollar